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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1139
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2567
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC
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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0953
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2962
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2347
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE
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RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000676

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN (GEHRENBECK)

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [KG](#)

SUBJECT: SOCIAL DEMOCRATS CRITICAL ON POLITICAL CLIMATE

BISHKEK 00000676 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Amb. Marie L. Yovanovitch, Reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: In a farewell meeting with Ambassador June 26, ex-Prime Minister and Social Democratic Party (SDPK) leader Almaz Atambayev and SDPK MPs Bakyt Beshimov and Roza Otunbayeva offered a negative assessment of Kyrgyzstan's economic and political climate and were particularly critical of President Bakiyev's leadership. They encouraged further U.S. assistance to civil society and political party development. End Summary.

¶2. (C) In a June 26 meeting with the Ambassador, Atambayev asserted that life, in general, was worse now than before the 2005 "revolution." He said that Bakiyev had lost any moral authority, and he was critical of the government structure that Bakiyev had allowed to develop, which he described as "up to eight presidents," each wielding authority. Among the other "presidents," he listed President Bakiyev's brother, Janysh, who was appointed head of the Presidential Security Service on June 3, and Bishkek City Mayor Daniyar Usenov. Given the current conditions, reforms were more important than ever, and the opposition had a duty to step up and invoke change. Nevertheless, Atambayev said that Kyrgyz politics was so polarized that bloodshed was possible during the next elections; Beshimov agreed. (Comment: They have both said this before previous demonstrations. Otunbayeva was notably silent during this part of the conversation. End comment.) Atambayev said that he planned to meet with leaders of the opposition Ata Meken party on June 27 to discuss uniting the opposition and developing a plan of action focused on reforms. Turning to party development, Atambayev said there was a need for increased political party training by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI).

¶3. (C) Parliamentarians Otunbayeva and Beshimov said that Kyrgyzstan needed further development of NGOs and political parties, while at the same time the country should improve upon its working relationships with Russia and Kazakhstan. Beshimov claimed that Bakiyev's popularity continued to decline, and he said that Bakiyev's control over certain

ministries was dwindling. Acknowledging that their country was young and president inexperienced, Otunbayeva hoped for a better working relationship with its larger neighbors, Kazakhstan and Russia. Both MPs complained of widespread corruption within the government but believed that support for a strong civil society and free press would help to keep officials in check.

14. (C) They also echoed Atambayev's call for intensifying IRI and NDI training for political parties. All three called for increased exchanges and for the U.S. government to more actively support civil society and the opposition. "It is time for the U.S. to be more active and plan for the future in Kyrgyzstan," said Otunbayeva. She claimed the Russian government had already written off Bakiyev and was courting other politicians to succeed him.

COMMENT

15. (C) The opposition members shared with Ambassador their bleak outlook on the political and social situation currently plaguing Kyrgyzstan. Not surprisingly, they criticized Bakiyev for ineptness and failure to bring positive reforms. They also criticized the U.S. government for not providing the necessary funding to facilitate the Kyrgyz transition to democracy. Although Atambayev noted that the "March Revolution" had shown that it was important to plan before seizing power and to develop an integrated platform, none of the politicians was critical of actions or inaction of the opposition. While it is yet unclear if Atambayev will be able to unite the opposition, all felt that Bakiyev's disappointing performance as president may open the door of

BISHKEK 00000676 002.2 OF 002

opportunity for serious change within the government.
YOVANOVITCH